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Richard Pearce-Moses
The Heard Museum

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Women and Warriors of the Plains: The Pioneer Photographs of Julia E. Tuell. By Dan Aadland. New York: Macmillan, 1996. Photographs, notes. xix + 182 pp. \$29.95.

Julia Ethel Toops Tuell was the wife of a schoolmaster on reservation schools where she taught home economics, served as a field nurse, and raised four children. She began taking photographs in 1906 on the Northern Cheyenne reservation at Lama Deer, Montana, and continued when she lived with the Sioux Indians on the Rosebud Reservation east of the Black Hills in South Dakota. Although a sideline, she made numerous photographs of Native American life for more than two decades.

Tuell used an eight-by-ten-inch glass-plate camera, an unusual choice given its bulk, heavy weight, and cumbersomeness. Smaller cameras had been around since the 1870s, and Eastman had introduced snapshot cameras that used roll-film in the 1880s. She may have preferred a large format negative, however, since it eliminated the need for an enlarger and darkroom for printing.

Aadland credits Tuell with impeccable taste and the eye of an artist. Based on her many photographs reprinted here, she does not rank among such great Western photographers as Charlie Lummis, Timothy O'Sullivan, Carleton Watkins, or William Henry Jackson. Although a few are picturesque, most of her works lack visual organization or aesthetic impact. Tuell's photographs are noteworthy for their subject matter, however. While the Native American

photographs of Edward S. Curtis and Emma Freeman may be beautiful, their romanticism robs them of authenticity. Tuell's capture "details of reservation life, from jerking meat to pounding chokecherries to butchering dogs for meat," as well as sacred ceremonies. As Aadland notes, "Julia's photographs show a grasp of what is important." He goes on to observe, moreover, that

She had the good fortune to be exposed to moments in time that begged to be frozen. Lama Deer, from 1906 to 1912, presented perhaps the last opportunity to pictorially preserve the Northern Cheyenne tribe in a state not too distant from its free-roaming past. . . . The adult Cheyennes still intimately knew all the skills needed for day-to-day survival on the prairie. Making jerky, pitching lodges, sewing skin clothing, crafting and using bows and arrows—all these were still immediate realities.

Women and Warriors of the Plains is neither a biography of Tuell, though it offers a basic account of her life, nor a photographic history, placing her work in the context of that of other photographers. It is a portfolio of historically interesting photographs of Cheyenne and Sioux Indians. Aadland's text interprets the images by describing their cultural significance. In addition to portraits and scenes of everyday camp activities, the book includes photographs of Sun Dance and Massaum ceremonies held near Lama Deer in 1911, which George Bird Grinnell also described in his two-volume *The Cheyenne Indians*, using some of Tuell's photographs as illustrations.

What's missing, especially from the interpretation of the Sun Dance and Massaum ceremonies, is a Native American perspective. Aadland relies on the commentary of early Euro-American observers. The book would be much stronger if it included contemporary Cheyenne and Sioux voices.

RICHARD PEARCE-MOSES
The Heard Museum